

GOVERNOR JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM

Friday, November 4, 2005

Hello, this is Governor Jennifer Granholm.

I am pleased to proclaim the month of November as “Return to Learn” month in Michigan.

This is another step in our effort to dramatically increase the number of college graduates in the state, through a series of activities at colleges and universities that will invite thousands of workers in Michigan to return to the classroom and finish their degrees.

In this new 21st century economy, the greatest asset that you have is actually a single piece of paper – a diploma.

When you graduate with a bachelor’s degree, over the course of your career, on average you will earn a million dollars more than someone who has finished high school. A million dollars in your pocket – that’s a clear win for you. And it is a win for the state, too.

The states with the highest number of college graduates are also the states with the strongest economies and the lowest unemployment rates.

We’re doing everything possible in Michigan to be one of those states that leads the nation with an educated workforce and a booming economy. And today, while we’re below the national average for the number of citizens with college degrees, we are above average when it comes to those who have received some college credit but have not completed their studies.

This gives us in Michigan a great opportunity – and a great opportunity for so many who are listening right now – because returning to learn is easier than you think.

For adults who went to school years ago but never got that diploma, many of the credits you earned as a student are still valid today. Also, between employer-based programs and financial aid available to students of all ages, obtaining that degree is absolutely affordable.

And throughout November, admissions offices at colleges and universities across the state are primed and ready to help get the reenrollment ball rolling.

We want Michigan to be the best educated state in the country – at every level.

And we’re working hard to ensure that every child in Michigan has the opportunity to attend college through new legislation I’ve proposed to create a \$4,000 scholarship for every student.

Michigan must be a state of tremendous opportunity – where the opportunity of education is within the grasp of not just every child, but every person in our state, young and, if you’re like me, not so young.

So the message we want to send in this Return to Learn month is that if you think you’re too old to go back to school, or if you think your credits have expired, or that it’s simply too expensive, think again.

We’re working to remove those barriers between you and the opportunity for higher education. Because we want everyone in Michigan to return to learn and return to earn.

Thank you for listening.